

habits thus ingrained into their very natures, it is impossible not to see that the primitive Christians, in thus discarding all semblance to a temple, but erecting large open halls in which there was no other division between those assembling in them than that necessary one of the raised platform for the president, and no semblance of an altar or a holy place, surely the evidence is perfectly irrefragable that these primitive Christians interpreted Christianity to be a social worship,—in which all were equal before their common Father,—in which all were brethren, “partakers of the heavenly calling, kings and priests unto God,”—in which, that “all things might be done decently and in order,” one was appointed by the church, that is, the “congregation of faithful men,” to preside and teach—holding the same relation to the assembled families as the natural head of each family occupied in the “church which is in every house,” and called also by the endearing name of father.

Will Cardinal Wiseman venture to deny these facts, and will he vouchsafe to explain how this significant relation between the presiding father and his brethren, “partakers in the heavenly calling,” came to be changed? How it was that his simple seat came to be called a “throne?” How it was that a thousand years after Christ’s appearance, screens began to be put up between “the throne” and the people? How it was that the communion table became changed into a stone altar? How it was that, instead of standing among the brethren, it was placed in a deep recess, in a place still called by the name of chancel, but no longer having its ancient use? Will he further explain how it is that the old Constantine churches have had their old walls cut through for the insertion of side chapels; and these self-same Constantine churches, in which, as he truly says, the old episcopal seat still remains, but which is not now used, and is boxed out from view by comparatively modern tabernacle work over a stone altar, and the thrones in advance of that? Will he vouchsafe to explain these indisputable facts, and clinch his explanation by accounting for the extraordinary contrast in arrangement and use afforded by a primitive church and a Gothic cathedral, once called the king’s house or the people’s, but, when bishops’ seats became “thrones,” by a very natural process transmogrified into “cathedral,” from *cathedra*, the Latin name for this now all-important “throne?”

JOHN ELLIOTT.

REPEAL OF THE LIGHT AND HEALTH TAX.

THE agitation for the repeal of the iniquitous window-tax—the tax on light, cleanliness, health, and morality—has now fairly begun. A very numerous meeting of the inhabitants of Islington was held last week for the purpose of adopting measures to obtain its complete and unconditional repeal. Mr. Wyld, M.P., was called to the chair, and in the course of his address said that, like Diogenes of old, who desired Alexander to stand out of his sunshine, they should say to ministers, that whatever their politics were, they must not prevent the sunshine from coming to the people. The meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. Wakley, M.P., and by various other gentlemen. Mr. George, one of the churchwardens of St. Anne’s, denounced this tax as one which created another: for by driving the poor into wretched dwellings the result was disease and consequent expense, as well as other evils to be borne by the public at large.

At the Marylebone Court-house, two days after, a crowded meeting of the delegates of the metropolitan parishes was held. Mr. J. A. Nicolson in the chair. Messrs. Wyld, Wakley, Ball, and Williams, M.P.s, Lord Dudley Stuart, M.P., Sir De Lacy Evans, M.P., and others, were also present; and it was resolved by acclamation that deputations from each of the metropolitan parishes, accompanied by the metropolitan and other members, should be invited to wait on the Chancellor, and urge the total, immediate, and unconditional repeal of the window-tax, and that Viscount Duncan, M.P., be requested to head the deputation.

One correspondent, “J. W.” says.—I think a plan should be set on foot to rouse the whole of the kingdom forthwith. Suppose that a

circular were issued from an association in London to all the mayors or overseers, or other officers in each town, requesting them to call a meeting, and petition Parliament for a total repeal of the window tax; and at the same time advising them to use their influence with their own member, if any, and all the county members. I should advise them to solicit pecuniary aid at the same time, to defray expenses. I think by this means they might get as much as would cover their outlay. If something like this was carried out, I am satisfied the tax would be removed. Do not let us wait for Government doing it, but arise and show them that we are in earnest.

Punch comes in with a “Sonnet scratched on a Window-pane ‘up a Court,’” which might be sent in the form of a petition to the Prime Minister by all who have, not words of their own to express their wants:—

“We windows of this dwelling are the eyes,
And being very small and very few,
But half resemble those which sagacious view.
Scanning through microscope blue-bottle flies.
More might we be; but this the tax denies—
That seems contrived to pinch the poor outright,
Sitting them even in Heaven’s free gift of light.
From ruddy morning’s dawn till daylight dies,
No ray that passes us but pays its toll.
But not alone for sight we serve: as lungs,
Air we admit to feed the living soul.
Which, breeding pestilence like smouldering flame,
That tax excludes, cursed by unnumbered tongues.
Let its repeal, John Russell, gild thy name.”

FOREIGN NEWS.

Architectural Labours in Austria.—At one of the last sittings of the French Institute, M. Lenormand stated, that the number of essays and monographies on the works of the middle ages becomes eight infinite. In France, the Comité des Arts et de Monuments, being a Governmental department, has done a great deal. Germany has remained rather behind in these labours, also for the reason, that it is from eastern that some of its architects expect a restitution of ancient art-splendour. The present minister of public instruction in Austria, M. Thun, has, at a late meeting of the Imperial and Royal Academy at Vienna, endeavoured to try another way; proclaiming, that art has to dwell on the great historical recollections of the country, and to mould and improve the life of the people. Contemporaneously with Boissier, it was Primisser who, at the beginning of the present century, directed attention towards the neglected monuments of the middle ages in Austria. Subsequently, Tschischka, of the charter office of Vienna, attempted the description of the cathedral of St. Stephen, the last huge monument of the middle ages. Scheiger and Büheim described the ancient castles (Burg-ruinen), of which Austria is very rich. Works like that of Prince Lychovsky, on the architectural monuments of Austria, and the splendid volume of Camerino on the Byzantine Antependium at Klosterneuburg, will always possess sterling value. Of works published in 1850, we mention the description of the west portal of St. Stephen. This structure, containing a great number of figures, is very interesting for its iconographic character, which has been rendered by very well-executed woodcuts. Dr. Hinder’s “Essay on Symbolism,” especially the symbolic of “the Lion in Christian Art;” and his description of the Polygon Chapel at Tulln, are interesting performances. We may state, in conclusion, that as Germany has always been foremost in speculation, in Austria, also, the thought seems to rise, that intelligence alone will never advance nor create new art. It is even talked of in earnest to establish masters’ schools (*Meister-schulen*) instead of academies, considering this as the only means to stay shallowness and want of character. The intended restoration (completing) of the cathedral of St. Vitus, at Prague, built on the same plan as Notre Dame, of Paris, may afford an opportunity for putting into execution those rather revolutionary ideas of our neighbours of Germany.

Art Union of Menick.—The prize of this Society for the present year will consist of a galvanography of Hanswangel, after the famous Columbus picture of Rubens. It is the first time that an extensive application has been made of this important discovery, as the original plate has also been multiplied for the

* The tax itself should be called the Window-pane.—Ed.

use of other Art Unions, and it will now be seen what can be done in this way, especially for the copying of large gallery pictures. For the year 1851 four landscapes of Kottmann have also been chosen, and M. E. Neureuther commissioned with their engraving. These plates will as well be multiplied by Galvano-plastic process. As the family of the departed gentleman enjoys a privilege for the publication of this artist’s Italian and Greek landscapes (fine amongst the fine), it is spoken of, that other Art Unions will purchase from them the right of publishing the remainder of the series, by which means the whole might become accessible to the public. The Bavarian artists intend to present King Ludwig with a splendid album, and an invitation to the Germans in Rome has been issued, asking their co-operation, which combined will not fail to bring forth a deserving and worthy art performance.

Curiosum.—An idea of the great stir on the Continent about the Great Exhibition, may be formed by the announcements in German papers, by which tavern-keepers and others invite their guests to view the plans and elevations of the building exhibited at their rooms.

New alimentary Substances for the Working Classes.—The French consul at the republic of Ecuador has brought thence two alimentary new plants of great importance. The tuber of one, called *Hocos*, has the form of an oblong potato: the interior of the substance, however, has a red and yellow colour, and the taste is that of a chestnut. The other is called *Millico*, and its form and taste is very near that of the potato. Both grow wild, and in great abundance, near Quito, even in the most meagre soil. Experiments on their propagation are now being made at the *Jardin des Plantes*, Paris.

Discovery of a New Picture by Raffaele.—The *Gazette de Cremona* states that a very splendid picture of this great master has been discovered. It represents the Virgin adoring the infant Jesus, St. Joseph standing at a distance. In a corner of the picture is the monogram S.R.C.—Sanctus Raffaele Urbianus.

Naples.—Besides the famous prohibition of Sophocles, Byron, Shakespeare, &c., the Neapolitan government is acting with the same severity towards art and artists. The room of the Museum containing the ambiguous pictures which could be formerly viewed, at least, by superior permission, has been altogether shut up, as well as that containing the Venus statue, &c. At the same time the MSS. of the library have been sealed up, and cannot now be consulted anyhow.

DOCTORING DAMP WALLS.

At the request of several correspondents we shall here state, as nearly as possible, the proportions of the ingredients used in the composition referred to in the conclusion of our recent article on this subject, although, having no guide or precedent, and our purpose being merely one of temporary personal convenience, failing some previous attempts of others, we merely caused the ingredients to be mixed up to the desired consistency without precise measurement. We may state, then, that probably three parts of resin, pitch, or bitumen, to one of India-rubber or gutta-percha solution will form a tough enough coating. The composition must be thinned with turpentine to a consistency manageable in cold solution on a cold wall. There can be no difficulty in this: but it may be necessary to point out how the ingredients should at first be united. Our own mode was simply this: we caused the resin and pitch to be melted in an iron-pot on a fire carefully covered up with ashes to prevent danger from fire; and when melted, turpentine was poured in so as to thin it to a consistency like treacle. To that the India-rubber solution (as purchased ready prepared) was added, and the whole stirred till the India rubber solution was further dissolved in the resinous solution. Requiring more of the toughening or gummy ingredient, and finding some gutta-percha solution at hand, it was then added in place of the India-rubber, and the whole formed an excellent paint when further thinned with turpentine and mixed with a little colour; but whether India-rubber alone, or gutta-percha alone, or a mixture of both, is best, remains to be tried by some one